

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 AID-20 DRC-01 /144 W

----- 119478

O R 051118Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7930

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOONNBY POUCH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL UDORN

USLO PEKING

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

SECDEF

DIA

USIA WASHDC

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC

CINCPACAF

CDR USSAG NKP

CDR 13 AF ADVON UDORN

USDAO SAIGON

COMUSMACTHAI

DODSPECREP BANKGOK

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DODSPECREP NKP

354 TFW KORAT
CHSPECACTS BANGKOK
CDR JCRC NKP
7 ACCS KORAT
432 TFW UDORN
8 TFW UBON
56 SOW NKP
388 TFW KORAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENTIANE 1788

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD; 13 AF ADVON, 432 TFW, 56 SOW, 388 TFW,
354 TFW AND 8 TFW FOR DO/DI; MACTHAI FOR J-2 AND PAO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PGOV, PFOR, PINT, ECON, LA
SUBJECT: LAO WEEKLY SITREP - MARCH 5

REF: VIENTIANE 1565

BEGIN SUMMARY: WEEK OF FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 5 WAS CHARACTERIZED BY WATCHFUL WAITING AS THE LPF PLENIPOTENTIARY PHOUN SIPRASEUTH CONSULTED IN SAM NEUA WITH THE LPF CENTRAL COMMITTEE. THERE IS NO INDICATION WHEN PHOUN OR OTHER PLENIPOTENTIARY, PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, MIGHT RETURN TO VIENTIANE, BRINGING WITH THEM LIST OF LPF DESIGNEES FOR COALITION GOVERNMENT (PGNU). LPF SCENARIO FOR INVESTITURE OF PGNU WAS OUTLINED IN VIENTIANE BY LPF DELEGATION CHIEF IN VIENTIANE, SOTH PHETRASY. A SMALL AMOUNT OF RLG-LPF COOPERATION WAS ACHIEVED WITHIN THE JOINT POLICE FORCES AND PROTECTIVE MILITARY FORCES, BUT MUCH STILL REMAINS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED. THE POSSIBILITY THAT CANADA MIGHT WITHDRAW FROM ICC/LAOS HAS BEEN MENTIONED BY ACTING CANADIAN COMMISSIONER TO ICC/LAOS. ON MILITARY FRONT, ONLY THREE INCIDENTS WERE RECORDED NATIONWIDE, WHILE, ON ECONOMIC SIDE, COST-OF-LIVING JUMPED DRAMATICALLY (I.E., 2.3 PERCENT) DURING THE WEEK. END SUMMARY.

I. IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT

1. JOINT CENTRAL COMMISSION DEVELOPMENTS

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ON MARCH 4, INTERIOR MINISTER PHENG PHONGSAVAN, RLG CHIEF JCCIA DELEGATE SOUKAN VILAYSARN AND GENERAL ATSAPHANGTONG PATHAMMAVONG, CHIEF OF RLG CONTINGENT TO THE PROTECTIVE MILITARY FORCES (PMFS), BRIEFED STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE LAO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS OF THE PMFS AND JOINT POLICE FORCES (JPFS) AS WELL AS JOINT ADMINISTRATION OF THE TWIN CAPITALS, WHICH HAVE BEEN AGREED UPON BY THE RLG AND LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT (LPF). ACCORDING TO XAT LAO, SOUKAN ASSURED THE COMMITTEE THAT

PROCEDURES NEGOTIATED WITH THE LPF DO NOT CIRCUMVENT THE VIENTIANE ACCORDS, THE LAO CONSTITUTION AND EXISTING LAO INSTITUTIONS. SOUKAN ASSERTED THAT LPF IS SATISFIED WITH SECURITY CONDITIONS IN VIENTIANE AND THAT THE RLG WILL DO ITS UTMOST TO ASSURE AN EFFECTIVE NEUTRALIZATION OF THE CAPITAL BY MARCH 15. SOUKAN ALSO SAID THAT FAR SENIOR OFFICER WILL DEPART SHORTLY FOR LUANG PRABANG TO OVERSEE IMPLEMENTATION OF ORDER FROM SOUVANNA THAT RLG TROOPS MENACING LPF POSITIONS IN THAT CITY SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN. THESE TROOPS HAVE BEEN A CAUSE CELEBRE FOR THE LPF.

RADIO PATHET LAO REPORTS THAT THE JOINT POLICE COMMAND MET FEBRUARY 26 TO DISCUSS SETTING UP A RIVER POLICE PATROL FORCE STAFFED BY BOTH SIDES. RPL COMPLAINED THAT RLG AIRPORT MILITARY GUARDS HAVE NOT HANDED OVER THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE JPFS, NOR HAS VIENTIANE METROPOLITAN POLICE. DESPITE THESE COMPLAINTS, PROGRESS IS BEING SLOWLY MADE ON NEUTRALIZATION.

RLG DELEGATION SPOKESMAN LANE PATHAMMAVONG, AFTER THE FEBRUARY 27 JCCIA MEETING, SAID THAT JCCIA REPS VISITED THE JPF HEAD-QUARTERS IN VIENTIANE AND NOTED THAT THE JPFS WERE ASSIGNED TO THREE LOCALES IN VIENTIANE.

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF LAO NATIONAL POLICE DECLARED MARCH 4 THAT IT HAS BEEN PROPOSED TO REPLACE THE PRESENT HEAD OF THE RLG JOINT POLICE FORCES CONTINGENT, WHO IS A POLICE COLONEL, BY A POLICE GENERAL. WHILE THIS RECOMMENDATION HAS YET TO BE APPROVED, IT MAY BE REFLECTIVE OF THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE WHICH THE JPFS ARE ASSUMING IN RLG EYES.

THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE PMFS JOINT COMMAND IS NOW FUNCTIONING AT THE SITE OF THE OLD CAMBODIAN EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE. RPL STATES THAT, ON FEBRUARY 26, THE PMFS JOINT COMMAND DEMARCATED THE INNER BOUNDARY OF THE 15 KILOMETER BUFFER ZONE WHICH WILL

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SURROUND VIENTIANE.

2. RLG ACTIVITIES

WITH NEGOTIATING BALL NOW IN THE LPF COURT, RLG OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN UNUSUALLY RELUCTANT TO MAKE PREDICTIONS ABOUT THE TIMING OF FORMATION OF A NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT. EVERYONE IN VIENTIANE APPEARS TO BE AWAITING THE RETURN OF LPF PLENIPOTENTIARIES--PHOUN SIPRASEUTH AND/OR PHOUMI VONGVICHIT--FROM SAM NEUA. MEANWHILE, RENOVATION OF LPF QUARTERS IN VIENTIANE CONTINUES AT A GOOD PACE.

3. LPF ACTIVITIES

ON FEBRUARY 27, LPF PLENIPOTENTIARY PHOUN SIPRASEUTH DEPARTED

FOR SAM NEUA VIA HANOI, WHERE HE IS BELIEVED TO BE DISCUSSING THE
FORMATION OF THE PGNU WITH THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. THERE IS NO
INDICATION WHEN HE OR PHOUMI WILL RETURN TO VIENTIANE. AFTER THE
FEBRUARY 27 JCCIA MEETING, LPF SPOKESMAN PHAO BOUNNAPHOL STATED
THAT LPF DOES NOT REGARD TWIN CAPITALS TO HAVE BEEN NEUTRALIZED,
SINCE RLG ARMED FORCES HAVE YET TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM VIENTIANE
IN PARTICULAR.

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL UDORN

USLO PEKING

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

SECDEF

DIA

USIA WASHDC

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC
CINCPACAF
CDR USSAG NKP
CDR 13 AF ADVON UDORN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 VIENTIANE 1788

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD; 13 AF ADVON, 432 TFW, 56 SOW, 388 TFW,
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SOTH PHETRASY TOLD CANADIAN ICC REP THAT LPF FAVORS FOLLOWING
SCENARIO FOR PGNU INVESTITURE: PHOUMI WILL COME TO VIENTIANE WITH
LIST OF LPF CABINET AND PGNU MEMBERS; THEN, SOUVANNA AND
SOUPHANOUVONG WILL MEET IN LUANG PRABANG TO DRAFT TOGETHER THE
ROYAL DECREE PRIOR TO APPOINTING THE NEW GOVERNMENT. THE TWO
PRINCES WILL ONLY SEE THE KING ONCE, TO PRESENT THE DECREE FOR
HIS SIGNATURE. THIS ACT WILL CONSTITUTE INVESTITURE OF PGNU FOR
PURPOSE OF IMPLEMENTING LAOS ACCORDS. SOTH SAID THAT OTHER
MINISTERS WOULD NOT ACCOMPANY THE TWO PRINCES TO LUANG PRABANG.
(COMMENT: WHILE THIS MAY INDEED BY LPF VIEW, WE HAVE NO INDICA-
TION THAT THIS SCENARIO HAS BEEN APPROVED BY SOUVANNA. IT IS ALSO
NOT KNOWN WHETHER SOUVANNA HAS DISCUSSED IT WITH THE KING, WHO
MAY AT LAST MINUTE ATTEMPT TO WORK SOME FORM OF CONSTITUTIONAL
RATIFICATION INTO THE PROCESS. END COMMENT)

LPF MEDIA EXHIBITED MORE THAN ITS NORMAL AMOUNT OF PARANOIA
DURING THE WEEK. ON FEBRUARY 26, PATHET LAO NEWS AGENCY ISSUED
A BLISTERING ATTACK ON USIS, ACCUSING IT OF BEING A "US PSY-WAR
PROPAGANDA MACHINE" WHICH ONLY PRESENTS "DISTORTIONS OF FACT AND
UNILATERALLY FABRICATED AND GROUNDLESS NEWS REPORTS." LPF MEDIA
CONTINUES TO CATALOGUE VARIOUS ACTS OF "SABOTAGE" AND "HARASSMENT"
AGAINST THEIR FORCES IN VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG, LAYING THE
BLAME FOR THEM AT THE DOORSTEP OF THE "VIENTIANE RIGHTISTS" AND
"U.S. WARMONGERS."

4. OTHER

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FBIS BANGKOK (271053Z FEB 74) CARRIED TEXT OF FEBRUARY 26 STATEMENT MADE BY "PRGRSV FOREIGN MINISTER" COMMEMORATING FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF VIENTIANE ACCORDS. STATEMENT INCLUDES OMINOUS REFERENCE THAT PRG IS "READY TO ESTABLISH AND DEVELOP FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THIS (COALITION) GOVERNMENT."

II. ICC ACTIVITIES

ACTING CANADIAN COMMISSIONER TO ICC/LAOS HAS INFORMED US THAT CANADIAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED BY GOC FOREIGN MINISTRY TO TAKE SOUNDING AT APPROPRIATE HIGH LEVEL OF USG TO ASCERTAIN USG REACTION IF CANADA DECIDES TO WITHDRAW FROM ICC/LAOS. REP STATED THAT CANADIAN MOVE TOWARDS POSSIBLE DISENGAGEMENT FROM ICC/LAOS RELATES TO CONCERN IN OTTAWA THAT, IF CANADA REMAINS ON ICC UNDER PRESENT AMBIGUOUS GUIDELINES AND THE PATHET LAO GRADUALLY INCREASES INFLUENCE WITHIN RLG, THEN THE OUTCOME IN EFFECT WOULD MEAN CANADA PUT SEAL OF APPROVAL ON COMMUNIST TAKEOVER OF LAOS.

III. SECURITY SITUATION

MILITARY ACTIVITY DURING PERIOD ENDING MARCH 5 DECLINED MARKEDLY. ONLY THREE INCIDENTS WERE REPORTED, ALL IN MR-IV, INCLUDING TWO MAJOR CLASHES IN AN AREA NINE KILOMETERS SOUTHWEST OF PHIAFAY, WITH NO CASUALTIES REPORTED ON EITHER SIDE. RADIO PATHET LAO CONTINUES TO FUME AGAINST THE US AND RLG, CLAIMING NUMEROUS CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS AND AIR SORTIES.

IV. ECONOMIC SITUATION

USAID COST-OF-LIVING INDEX INCREASED 2.3 PERCENT DURING THE WEEK. RICE AND MEAT PRICES REMAINED STABLE BUT PRICE OF FISH AND SOME VEGETABLES INCREASED. FOREIGN EXCHANGE DEMAND FOR WEEK ENDING MARCH 1 REMAINED STABLE AT LEVEL SLIGHTLY ABOVE CY-73 WEEKLY AVERAGE.

ACCORDING TO NEWSPAPER REPORTS, AN RLG COMMISSION HAS RECOMMENDED A 47 PERCENT FARE INCREASE FOR ROYAL AIR LAO DOMESTIC FLIGHTS.

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WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COALITION GOVERNMENT, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, ARMED FORCES, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, PEACE PLANS, LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, GROUND COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974VIENTI01788
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740365/aaaacjbh.tel
Line Count: 331
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
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Review Authority: garlanwa
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Review Content Flags:
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <16 JUL 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

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EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

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Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAO WEEKLY SITREP - MARCH 5
TAGS: MOPS, PGOV, PFOR, PINT, ECON, LA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005